

The U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative

In the West Bank and Gaza



MEPI helps build stronger, more sustainable institutions in the West Bank and Gaza to advance citizen interests and address important social, economic, and political issues.

MEPI projects in the West Bank and Gaza support capacity-building and good governance. These projects have made important strides in helping to increase access to education for young Palestinians and strengthening local media. Additionally, MEPI activities empower women and young people to become more engaged in Palestinian civil society.



Empowering Civil Society

MEPI continues to expand its engagement with local civil society organizations (CSOs) through its unique Local Grant Program, which directly supports civic actors throughout the country.

One of MEPI's local grants supports the Deir al-Hatab Women's Charitable Society, which offers training for students between the ages of 13 and 17 in the West Bank and Gaza. The training focuses on life skills, team building,

human rights, democracy, communication, and leadership. Deir al-Hatab is also establishing a students' parliament to engage legislative officials in discussions on issues relevant to young Palestinians.

MEPI also supports the International Republican Institute's (IRI) "Public Opinion Polling and Political Leadership" project. This project supports independent democratic political activists and promotes the utilization of public opinion research in public dialogue. IRI and its local polling partner, the Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD), provide relevant public opinion research to key partners, stakeholders, civil society representatives and influential decision makers. The results of these polls are made available to the public through AWRAD publications and monthly town hall meetings. The polling results are also used in consultations with independent parties and with individual independent leaders.



Promoting Access to Education

MEPI recognizes the importance of investing in young people throughout the Palestinian Territories by reducing their barriers to quality education.

With MEPI's support, America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc. (AMIDEAST) is implementing the "American Palestinian Local University Scholarships (A-PLUS)" project. A-PLUS provides scholarships to Palestinian students who exhibit strong academic potential but lack funds to pay tuition and expenses at local universities in the West Bank and Gaza. To date, the project has provided full scholarships to approximately 80 talented Palestinian students. These scholarships cover local tuition and fees, books and transportation costs for the full length of a four year undergraduate education.



In another partnership with MEPI, AMIDEAST is implementing the "Lincoln Incentive Grants" project. This project provides Palestinian high schools students pathways to higher education by supporting the costs of college preparatory material, pre-application testing and individualized academic counseling, including information on financial aid, enabling them to apply to and attend U.S. universities. Since the project's inception in 2010, 20 students have been admitted with full scholarships into U.S. universities or prep schools, including the University of Pennsylvania, Swarthmore College, and Mount Holyoke College.

Empowering Women and Youth

Wattan TV is working with MEPI to implement the "Beam of Hope" project, which promotes the open discussion of social issues amongst Palestinian women through a 24-episode TV series. The project provides women a forum to freely express their opinions, raising awareness on their status and rights in Palestinian society.

In partnership with MEPI, Souktel International's "Supporting Grassroots Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to Engage with Women across the West Bank and Gaza" project is equipping three women-focused NGOs with mobile software platforms. This software is enabling

the NGOs to connect more than 3,400 Palestinian women with information and peer networking via Short Message Service (SMS). This allows for NGOs to conduct larger scale and more frequent outreach to women across the West Bank and Gaza, enhancing interactive community engagement.

With MEPI's support, the East Jerusalem YMCA is implementing the "Supporting Palestinian Youth in Jerusalem" project. This project enables young Palestinians in Jerusalem to explore concepts of diversity and identity through participatory workshops on literature, poetry, and film. The YMCA is also teaching young people about civic participation to develop their leadership and teamwork experience, in addition to building their confidence and communication skills. Youth nearing high school graduation also receive career counseling.



MEPI also supports the Business Women Forum's "Young Women Entrepreneurs Leading Role" project. This project empowers young women entrepreneurs to be financially independent by building their capacity to develop business plans and launch their own small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Business Women Forum also conducts outreach and networking workshops in entrepreneurship in underserved areas in the West Bank.

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